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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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->From the Editor’s Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
"""""""""""""""""""""""""""

What a terrific first week of vacation! Can’t you tell I’m having a better than usual time; this week’s issue is out late! The weather has been really nice. A little hot on occasion, but that’s what swimming pools are for! <g>

Yes, we finally got the swimming pool open. We were waiting for a pool service place to call us back, but we decided we couldn’t wait. We called a number of people to try and learn what was causing our problem (no pressure registering on the filter pressure gauge). One person told us to replace the gauge - that these gauges were prone to going bad quickly. The other thing we wanted to learn was how to check the filter sand. We took the filter apart last year, but didn’t see where the sand was located. So, we took a ride to our neighborhood pool supply store. Grabbed a pressure gauge fairly quickly (service people are very helpful!). We then asked the guy if he could show us on a demo model of our filter where and how to check the sand. Of course, they don’t carry our model of filter any longer! But, he was kind enough to explain it to us. We also picked up 150 pounds of silica sand, figuring we were low (our filter supposedly holds 250 pounds!).

Got home and removed the drain to the filter. Some sand dropped out along with some residual water. So far, so good. We then pulled the hoses of the filter. We then proceeded to remove the top of the filter. Okay, where the heck is the sand? We knew the sand had to be somewhere in the "belly" of the filter, but how do we get to it? Well, when all else fails, pull at something that you feel should be removable! The center post and filter was not moving. I finally yanked on it and it came loose. Hey, there’s sand in this thing!

Put the drain plug back in, first. I then put in two bags of sand (100 pounds). Made sure the center post and filter bucket were secured (or so I thought). Put the top back on and tightened the gasket. Put the hoses back on (one clamp broke!). Turned on the filter and water is coming out from every possible place! Insert your favorite expletive here!

We took everything apart again. The filter basket inside was bent and not properly centered. We did what we could to remedy that. Got everything back on, swapped some hose clamps around for the best possible fit. Turned the filter back on. Just a little water from one of the hoses. We could live with that for a day until I could get to the hardware store. The important thing was did we have any pressure? Looking at the gauge, the needle went up a little. 5 PSI, 10, 15! Yea! 20 PSI! Oops, a little too much. We switched the filter setting from filter to backwash. Backwash is to flush the filter. Plenty of filthy water was flushed out as well as some excess sand. We waited until the water was clear, and then switched over to the filter setting again. Perfect, we had a reading of 13 PSI!

We then added more pool chemicals to clean up the pool water, and waited. This was last Sunday. By Wednesday, the water was pretty clean. Thursday, it was 90 degrees or more - we went swimming! The water was cold, but refreshing! We now didn’t care how hot it got, we had the means to overcome

it (without going indoors and sitting in air conditioning!).

Overall, it's working pretty well. We added more chemicals today to clear up some residual algae and to increase the pH levels. Some residual chemicals haven't completely dissolved yet, but a day or so of running through the filter should clear that up. Overall, we did really well compared to the disaster we had to clean up last year! Now, next year we'll be fully prepared!

On the computing technology side of things, the testimony for the Microsoft antitrust case is finally over. Waitaminit! That's just the testimony! The resolution is still to be decided!

I've been following this trial somewhat the past few months. I still don't know where I stand. Both sides of this issue have made some excellent points to their case, and poor. It'll be very interesting to hear how this case pans out because I believe that whatever the final outcome, there is going to be some major changes to Microsoft, and perhaps even the government's antitrust laws. Stay tuned.

Meanwhile, I have to move the lawn sprinkler to another dry area of the lawn. We've had negligible rain in almost two months - the lawn and gardens are taking a beating! Such is the life of a [fairly] new homeowner! Then it's time to publish this week's issue and then relax again, grab another ice-cold beer, and read the newspaper. I could get used to these vacations!

Until next time...

Draconis Pro 1.6 Released

From: Kevin Savetz <savetz@northcoast.com>

The all in one Internet solution Draconis (pro) is now
available as patchlevel 2. Lots of bugs have been fixed especially
regarding JavaScript support (pro version). A pre release of
Adamas 1.6 Pl.3 has been released as well which includes some
fixes regarding frames.

Support Page: http://www.draconis-pro.de/

Patch Download: http://dc2.uni-bielefeld.de/atari/support/epatch.htm

Adamas 1.6 Pre Release: http://dc2.uni-bielefeld.de/atari/edownl.htm

[This news item courtesy of http://www.atari.org
and Jan Daldrup http://xonline.atari.org]

Attention Atari Users and Programmers!!!

From: "Bengy Collins" <collins@bulli.com>

This notice is to inform everyone of the MGC '99.
In this email:

General Information
The Rules
The Prizes
The Deadlines
The Sponsors

General information:

This is the first annual MagiC Online, in conjunction with The X, MagiC programming competition. The judges will be the Atari community. All entries will be available for download on December 5th, 1999. At this time, voting sheets will be made available to the general public. The winner(s) will be notified on Christmas Day, December 25th, 1999. This means that all nominations must be received by December 24, 1999.

The goal is to create the best possible conversion of a classic game. Examples would be conversions of Asteroids, pacman, frogger. A list of many possible conversions can be viewed here. The catch is however, that the game must be created to run perfectly under MagiC in a GEM window.

The Rules:

* All interested programmers and/or groups which feel that they might be interested in entering this competition must e-mail one of the organizers (Bengy Collins <collins@bulli.com>, Jan Daldrup<thex@atari.org>) and confirm their registration. Remember, registration is free, but we need it in order to set up prizes and determine if this competition should be cancelled or not. The Entry deadline is September 15th 1999! NO REGISTRATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS DATE.

* The new system calls in NVDI can be used only as enhancements to the game. The game must be fully functional on bare (Standard) MagiC configurations. However, the game is allowed to take advantage of system extensions as long as the extensions are freely available. Example: BubbleGEM
* The game must be fully functional in ST High resolution /AND/ support at least a 16 color or greater video mode.
* As this is a MagiC programming contest, the game must attempt to use extensions such as BubbleGEM whenever possible.
* The game must either be shareware or freeware. However, if the shareware path is chosen, the game can not be crippled in any way.
* The game must come with documentation. ST-Guide and Text versions are acceptable.
* Game control will be one or more of the following: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick, Joypad.
* Sound and music can be used using XBIOS calls, thus allowing compatibility with MagiC PC. GEMJing may also be used.
* The game can not be officially released until Competition judging (December 5th, 1999). Games which are released before the end of the competition and games which already exist are disqualified.
* Any individual or crew may submit as many programs as desired.

The Prizes

First place: 250$ American
Second place: 150$ American
Third place: 100$ American

We are working very hard trying to get a prize for all entries. Producing a

game is a very long and difficult process, and we believe every attempt at it should be recognized!

Further sponsorship might possibly add more prizes to this list.

The Deadlines!

Entry Deadline (All this requires is an e-mail!) September 15th, 1999
Competition Closes on December 5th, 1999. All Games must be received by this time!
Nomination Deadline is December 24th, 1999. All vote forms must be sent in by this time.

Sponsors

All money raised for prizes is generated from the *2* Banners on the official MGC ’99 page and the MagiC Online Main Page! Failure to support these banners will simply force the competition to close. (We receive 10 cents per click, and we have 6 months to raise 500$)

URL’s

MagiC Online (Banner #1)
http://bengy.atari.org
Official English and German Pages (Banner #2)
English: http://bengy.atari.org/contest.htm
German: http://bengy.atari.org/contestd.htm

Contact information:

Jan Daldrup: mailto:thex@atari.org
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Bengy Collins: mailto:collins@bulli.com
Web: http://bengy.atari.org

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING

compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, I’ve finally done it. I went out and bought myself a shiny new PC laptop computer. It’s a real screamer. It’s got just about everything you could think of: DVD CD ROM, super-duper video, stereo speakers, removable hard drive... the whole nine yards.

It’s also got Windows 98 as an operating system. This is truly an amazing piece of programming. After only six days I’ve found a dozen ways to get the operating system to lock up, freeze up, hang up, and/or just generally sit there in all that cutting edge RAM and get the digital equivalent of a sharp blow to the head. Twelve different ways to bring this mighty miracle of modern programming know-how to its knees. And that’s after less than a week.

Some of you are probably wondering if I'm using the PC to write this column. The answer is no. While it might be true that the PC can retrieve data faster than a stock ST (most STs are limited to 14400 baud serial access while PCs access 56000 baud without a second thought), text editors and news readers are much more complicated on the PC platform. I simply don't have the time or the energy to learn new programs and spend more time doing what I can already do on my 'lowly' ST. So, for the time being at least, this Atari related column will be written on an Atari.

On another note, I know that there are many of you out there that have made the jump to Mac or PC but retain your interest in events pertaining to the Atari world. Most people that I have talked to say things like "Yeah, the PC is faster and has more colors than the old ST, but it's just not as much fun."

Having dealt with PCs for about ten years now, I've had plenty of time to think about what this 'fun' component might be. As strange as it sounds, I don't think it has anything to do with either hardware or software. I think it's the people involved in the platform that make the difference. As I've said before, to most people who use PCs, computers are merely tools; a means to an end. Their passion is for something else entirely and computers are only a way to access it.

Atari users, on the other hand, tend to be passionate about their computers. When you put people like that together you usually get fierce loyalty to whatever it is and a feeling of camaraderie that is hard to match. Wars have been won with such camaraderie. Is it any wonder that those of us who remain with the ST platform feel that kind of feeling?

If you have made the jump to another platform and are looking for something to rekindle that old feeling, log on to http://setiathome.ssl.berkeley.edu and download the "SETI@Home" screen saver. Those of you who are familiar with SETI (Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence) probably know that radio telescopes generate much more data than they can correlate and analyse in a timely manner. Normally, by the time they analyse the data, find something that looks interesting, get the necessary viewing time on the radio telescope and look back to where that interesting blip occurred, it's gone.

Remember the movie CONTACT? Well, those scenes give you a pretty good idea of what SETI is, but in real life finding a possible signal as it is actually happening would be the wildest bit of luck imaginable.

That's where SETI@Home comes in. The way it works is that you log on to the above-mentioned website and download the screensaver. Once loaded and registered, the screensaver will get a chunk of certified radio telescope data from the internet and analyse it while your computer is sitting idle. Once the analysis is finished (a day or two under most conditions), the screensaver will log on (either automatically or under your direction), forward the finished product, grab another block of data and start the process again. Using a vast number of personal computers in this manner, the SETI project might just be able to keep up with the influx of data. Whether or not we happen to tune in on "E.T." you can feel good knowing that you've helped out. And if by some chance we do find that galactic switchboard, your name could be mentioned prominently every time the subject of the first proof of extraterrestrial intelligence comes up. Now wouldn't THAT be cool??

I had thought of mentioning this whole premise to one of the excellent programmers who've provided us with internet applications that allow us to keep up with the big boys, but in this case I'm afraid that even a souped-up TT or Falcon just wouldn't be up to the task. Heck, even on this new whiz-bang laptop of mine (a 366 MHz Pentium II), it's taken more than 17 hours to analyze fifty four percent of the first chunk of data. However, if any of those programmers want to take a crack at it, I'd be more than happy to beta test for them.

Folks, in my opinion this is one of the few really good reasons to own a PC. Even if you decide not to download the screensaver, the site is worth taking a look at. Can you tell that SETI has been one of my interests for a long time?

So if you're a former Atari owner looking for something to rekindle that old feeling of being a part of something special, check this out. It'll be just you, me, and about 650,000 others... quite an elite clique, huh? <grin>

Okay, let's get to the stuff that's floating around on the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup

J. Lensbo asks about using one of the popular Atari emulators:

"Pardon my ignorance...I'm a newbie at this.
I downloaded Pacifist and TOS roms 1.0, 1.4 and 2.06 and put them all in the same folder. When I run PacifiST it won't work... something about no drive A image found, and also none of the roms are found. I have the correct directory settings... what am I doing wrong?"

Nicholas Bales tells J:

"Did you edit the pacifist.ini file to make it point to the correct .img files and .st files?

Did you give it only DOS paths (8+3 filenames), not VFAT ones?"

> Being a new PC owner who loves his tried and true Atari programs, you can rest assured that I'll be checking out all of the available emulators. I might even be convinced to write an article or two about them. jm

Mike Freeman posts:

"I am trying the idea of connecting my modem to the LAN port via a Mac to Modem cable, as I've seen talked about here recently. One problem, though: I can't get the STiNG dialer to recognize any port except Modem 2. In the Config selection, under Miscellaneous, the only option that comes up is Modem 2. I tried manually typing in LAN and Serial 2 into the dial.scr file, and no change. How do you do this?"

Pascal Ricard tells Mike:

"This is a matter of HS-Modem configuration (scc.prg or setter.ttp)."

Ronald Andersson, one of the brainy guys behind STinG, adds:

"It sounds to me as if you have missed installing HSModem or its modules properly in \AUTO\, or that they are somehow misconfigured or damaged.

I'm not sure what machine you have, as the ports that you mention exist both on MSTe and on TT030.

In any case, I have no MSTe, so I can only test this on my TT, and there I do get all 4 ports displayed in the same popup.

Btw: I do hope you realized that it *is* a popup, so you won't see all the alternatives without clicking on it.

What you then should see (on a TT) is:

Modem 1
Modem 2
Serial 1
Ser.2/LAN

In fact I see all of these even if I don't install HSModem at all, so if you can only get Modem 2, something must be seriously wrong. Unfortunately I can't see what that could be caused by at present."

David Ellis asks for information:

"I'm considering getting a ICD Link II and a SCSI portable ZIP drive. Anyone here have that (or similar) combination? Is it reliable?"

J.Lensbo tells David:

"I've got one... works fine!"

Terry Ross asks for help with setting up his Nova card to work with NVDI:

"I ran a program today that reconfigured certain NVDI drivers. Now I can't use NVDI (4) with my Nova (ET4000 - early drivers, I believe) card, using Magic 4 as an OS. Basically, if NVDI is active, I can only get output from the Nova Emulator program. I seem to remember that the NVDI drivers had to be installed after the Nova drivers. Unfortunately, I can't reinstall NVDI as both my Master and Work disks have sector or CRC errors, and I can't remember which NVDI system file was supposed to be used with the ET4000 so I can't change things around manually in the GEMSYS folder.

Anyone have any hints? Perhaps you could email me the appropriate NVDI file?"

Lonny Pursell tells Terry:

"Make sure the NVDIDRV?.SYS files are disabled by renaming them *.syx or something. It's possible they got re-installed some how?

Not sure how your assign.sys should look, but under some setups with nvdi with gfx cards the lines with SCREEN.SYS are replaced by other driver names. Maybe these got changed?"

Terry tells Lonnie:

"Thanks... It was the NVDIDRV?.SYS. I was under the impression that with Nova, at least one of them remained active. My impression was obviously mistaken."

Paul Nurminen asks for help with POPWatch:

"I've been using POPwatch 2.91 for a long time now, but lately, when I simply try to CONNECT (or send Queued mail that was written with NEWSie), I get an immediate "-00015 user timeout expired" message - BEFORE I EVEN CONNECT! And sometimes when I'm downloading a few e-mails, midway through I get this same error message. At one point I thought I had solved the problem by deleting the "History" file, and turning off all logging. But the problem reappeared some time later.

And it had worked perfectly for months, and I've not changed any settings. My "CONNECT TIMEOUT" is at 60 seconds, and my "DATA TIMEOUT" is at 100 seconds.

I've reinstalled the program a couple times from backup, and now recently grabbed the archive from Gary's web site again to re-install it that way. Same problem though.

Often it will work fine for days, then all of a sudden it's "TIMEOUT city"!

The only thing I think is different on my system recently is an upgrade to STinG 1.20 from 1.15, and the fact that I now have a NEMESIS installed in my Falcon. And perhaps this problem is somehow related to the strange freeze up problems I've been having with CAB 2.7?"

Pascal Ricard tells Paul:

"I've no problemo using STinG 1.20, Cab 2.7(e?), POPWatch and so on. My Falcon is not accelerated (except by use of the alternative RAM provided by the Magnum board).

Corrupted clusters ? You may try checking with Correct, Zorg, HPopt..."

Ronald Andersson tells Paul:

"I've been trying to think of what possible common factor those two clients could have, but I can't think of anything that they would share that would not also affect all other clients. Are these two the only ones you use ?

Several factors are common to both:

1: Basic STinG configuration, mainly through DEFAULT.CFG, the CPXs, and through the DIAL.SCR . You may need to check these for any mistakes made or settings forgotten in switching to STinG 1.20 .

2: DNS operations, which depend on a legal NAMESERVER, either from the DEFAULT.CFG or from DIAL.SCR, or even through PPP login directly from your ISP. Check settings against your account info.

3: DNS cache file. A corrupt one can have strange effects, and the best cure then is simply to erase CACHE.DNS and reboot. That will cause a message about the file being missing when STinG boots RESOLVE.STX, but a new CACHE.DNS will be created automatically."

J. Lensbo comes back and asks a question about a SyQuest 44:

"Does *anyone* have a Syquest removable drive hooked to their ST?? I just came into a couple that have 44 meg removables and one 200 meg removables. The 44's work fine, but I'm having trouble with the 200.

I hooked it to my hard drive with a SCSI cable... the ID was fine and it was seen on bootup. My hard drive is a 105 meg partitioned as drives C, D, E and F. I installed a drive G - hoping it would show the Syquest - but when I clicked on it it said "drive not found".

I put in my ICD disk thinking I needed to format the thing, then read the docs that I might format the WRONG drive... I certainly don't want to reformat my hard drive by mistake!"

Terry Kelly tells J:

"Well, I'm not an expert, but I do have two syquest drives hooked to my system. Depending on the software you are using (TOS and hard disk driver), the size of the 200 meg might be a problem. Certainly, the drive needs to be partitioned in an Atari compatible format. Until that is done there is no way for your software to "find" it. I don't think you need to do a low level format, just a repartitioning.

You should try and partition based on the SCSI ID number of the 200 meg syquest. As long as you are sure what that number is, there should be no danger of trashing your boot drive."

Well folks, that's it for this week. Tune again next issue, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Pac Man Fever CD Released!
"""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""" JagFest '99 Show Reports!
'Ape Escape'! New Rugrats!
NUON News! Looney Tunes Games!
And much more!

->From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!
""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

Well, reports from JagFest '99 have been coming in and the reviews I've seen have been very positive. Congratulations to Carl Forhan for a successful show! As you'll see in the reports to follow, the attendees got to see some new things for the Jaguar, as well as some of the hits from the past.

Regarding the Classic Gaming Expo "soap opera", things seem to have quieted down this past week. I've heard from a number of the players this past week

in response to my editorials the past two weeks. I was actually anticipating "flames" when I saw who the messages were from, but instead was pleasantly surprised to learn that some of the people involved wrote to tell me thanks! Seeing what was going on from an unbiased view made some realize just how crazy things were.

Although I doubt that I had any influence with my editorials, I have learned that things are improving among some of the "injured" parties. Whether or not any of the people who pulled out of the show (Nolan Bushnell, Jerry Jessop, Curt Vendel, etc.) will now attend remains to be seen. However, I wouldn't be surprised if all - with perhaps the exception of Bushnell - ended up attending. It would be the right thing to do, and the best solution for all involved. I'll be sure to keep you up-to-date on the situation.

Until next time...

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
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Ape Escape for PlayStation Game Console Breaks
New Ground in 3D Platform Gaming

New Action/Platform Title Pushes Gaming Boundaries Through
Full Utilization of DUAL SHOCK Analog Controller

Sony Computer Entertainment America announced the release of Ape Escape, a groundbreaking original 3D action/platform title, available exclusively for the PlayStation game console.

Developed by Sony Computer Entertainment Inc., Ape Escape is the first and only game specifically designed to allow players full use of the DUAL SHOCK analog controller, elevating the PlayStation gaming experience to an entirely new level.

Ape Escape sets a new gameplay standard by challenging players to utilize both controller sticks to simultaneously maneuver character movements and control their gadgets and vehicles.

Players will use their skills and intuition to control movement and activate an arsenal of unique gadgets including a Stun Club, Time Net, Sky Flyer (propeller), Slingback Shooter (slingshot), Super Dash Hoop, Monkey Radar, a Remote Control Car and Water Net, all while enjoying fast-paced, innovative gameplay and exploring massive 3D environments.

Additional key game features include:

-- Vehicles including a tank and a row boat (players must maneuver vehicles using both sticks of the DUAL SHOCK analog controller);

-- Mind-twisting mini-games including skiing, boxing rounds and a

monkey galaxy shooting gallery;

-- Clock racing time attacks;

-- More than 25 levels spanning eight unique worlds; and

-- Training rooms to learn how to use each unique gadget.

‘‘Ape Escape clearly pushes the boundaries of the PlayStation gaming experience by offering players refreshing, original and innovative gameplay, including full use of both controller sticks," said Ami Blaire, director, product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America.

‘‘The game is a fast moving adventure that is challenging and entertaining for gamers of all ages -- we predict consumers will go completely ape over Ape Escape!"

In the game, Specter and his boisterous band of apes have invaded the professor’s laboratory at the zoo, stolen intelligence enhancing helmets and activated the time machine to transport themselves back in time in an attempt to make monkeys the new rulers of the world. Spike, a fearless young boy, arrives at the lab with his friend, Jake, just as Specter and his monkey minions are being transported back in time.

Now it is up to Spike to capture all of the monkeys and save the world.

Eidos Interactive Redefines Real-Time Strategy With Warzone 2100 for PlayStation

Eidos Interactive, announced this week the release of Warzone 2100 for the PlayStation.

Warzone 2100 redefines real time strategy (RTS) for the PlayStation by putting the strategy directly in the players’ hands.

Taking place over three large campaigns within a full 3D game world, gamers set out to build a new world from the ashes of a civilization wiped out by atomic Armageddon. More than 400 researched artifacts allow players to design and customize more than 2000 battle units.

The result is battle units ranging from flamer mounted cyborgs and heavy battle tanks to VTOL aircraft. In addition, the depth of the artificial intelligence systems allows gamers to recycle the experience of field units into bigger, better and fiercer war machines.

‘‘Warzone 2100 showcases Eidos Interactive’s dedication to bringing quality titles of all genres to the PlayStation," said Rob Dyer, president, Eidos Interactive. ‘‘The depth of gameplay in Warzone 2100, 3D terrain and artificial intelligence systems combine to create an experience that sets the standard for PlayStation RTS titles."

Warzone 2100 is set to take the RTS market by storm, having received high scores from PlayStation publications such as Playstation Extreme, which gave the game a 92%, and the Official PlayStation Magazine, in which Warzone scored a four out of five.

Acclaim Invites South Park Fans To Party In "Chef’s Luv Shack" Video Game

Acclaim Studios announced the development of South Park: Chef’s Luv Shack, a new multiplayer-style trivia game that will challenge players to both outwit and out-play their opponents. Developed by Acclaim Studios Austin, creators of Acclaim’s successful South Park game released last year for the Nintendo 64 and PC, South Park: Chef’s Luv Shack will be released for the PC, Nintendo 64, and Sony PlayStation this Fall. The game is based on Comedy Central’s hit animated series ‘‘South Park."

‘‘Fans of South Park are going to love Chef’s Luv Shack," said Tom Bass, product manager at Acclaim Entertainment. ‘‘The combination of trivia and South Park-inspired mini-games will make the perfect party game."

South Park: Chef’s Luv Shack is a multi-player party experience hosted by the swinging lothario, Chef. Up to four gamers take the role of Cartman, Kenny, Kyle, or Stan and compete in a combination of wacky trivia showdowns and South Park episode-inspired mini-games such as ‘‘Cartman’s German Song," ‘‘Beefcake," and ‘‘Spank the Monkey with Mr. Mackey." In ‘‘Beefcake," gamers play the role of Cartman, who hurriedly moves back and forth across the screen to gobble down cans of Weight Gain 4000 that are hurled down at him. Fans of the show will recognize Cartman’s antagonists as the surly spokesmen for Weight Gain 4000.

‘‘The South Park team had a great time coming up with wacky ideas for the mini-games," says lead designer and project manager Jools Watsham. ‘‘South Park fans will instantly appreciate how true we’ve remained to the cable series."

South Park: Chef’s Luv Shack will feature all new hilarious sound bites created specifically for this game by the show’s creators Matt Stone and Trey Parker, as well as Isaac Hayes.

Acclaim’s South Park franchise will be supported by a major nationwide marketing campaign that includes television, radio, online and in-store merchandising targeted to adult gamers. Acclaim has included a warning on the game’s box cover informing purchasers of South Park’s adult content and language.

THQ Launches Multi-Million Dollar Marketing Campaign for ‘Rugrats: Scavenger Hunt’

First-Ever Rugrats Game for the Nintendo 64 Releases This June

THQ Inc. Tuesday announced its multi-million dollar marketing campaign to support the release of ‘‘Rugrats: Scavenger Hunt," the first Nintendo 64 game featuring Nickelodeon’s Rugrats, the highest-rated kids program in the United States.

Marketing support includes national print and television advertising, major promotional tie-ins with Kid Rhino Records, Paramount Home Video and Simon Spotlight, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children’s publishing, in addition to online campaigns.

‘‘The Rugrats property continues to thrive as THQ prepares for the release

of ‘Rugrats: Scavenger Hunt,"’ stated Alison Locke, senior vice president, marketing and sales, THQ. ‘‘We’ve had tremendous success with our initial Rugrats games since their release and now is the perfect time to bring the first Nintendo 64 Rugrats game to millions of Rugrats and N64 enthusiasts. Our intensive marketing campaign is sure to fuel the power behind this release."

‘‘Rugrats: Scavenger Hunt" will feature its own Web site in addition to a 3-month campaign on Nick.com. Further Nickelodeon endorsement includes on-air product mentions during Nickelodeon Television’s 20-day, 20th birthday celebration.

The game lets kids of all ages play as their favorite Rugrats character in one of the first interactive 3D board games for the Nintendo 64. Featuring the lovable characters and voices from the Emmy Award-winning television series, ‘‘Rugrats: Scavenger Hunt" allows 1 to 4 players to go diaper-to-diaper in search of hidden treasures.

The music is Rugrats music composed and recorded by Mark Mothersbaugh, the composer of all Rugrats music for the television show and feature film.

Kids can venture through Angelica’s Temple of Gloom, hunting for and collecting broken ancient Aztec pieces before the evil Aztecca Queen gets her hands on players. Kids can also journey back to the Pre-a-Stork Era to help their dinosaur friend Reptar clean up a big candy mess on Reptar’s Island or scuba dive for hidden pirate treasure in Pirate Treasure Hunt.

Looney Tunes Hit Video Game Market

Just months after Disney announced Mickey Mouse will make his first foray into video games, Warner Bros. Interactive says Bugs Bunny and other popular Looney Tunes characters will begin starring in their own 3-D interactive titles.

The studio division has inked a five-year multimillion-dollar licensing deal with video game creator Infogrames Entertainment to produce 20 titles based on its animated franchise.

As part of the deal, the French gamemaker behind ‘‘Mission: Impossible" and other hit games has already released two Looney Tunes-based titles for Nintendo’s handheld Game Boy Color system.

The next wave of titles will be created for the Sony PlayStation and Nintendo 64 console systems, beginning with the Bugs Bunny-starring game ‘‘Lost in Time," which will go out to retailersthis month.

‘‘Taz Express," featuring the Tazmanian Devil, will hit store shelves in November for Nintendo 64, while ‘‘Duck Dodgers" starring Daffy Duck will roll out in 2000, also for Nintendo 64.

‘‘It’s a good way to keep the franchise fresh," said Jeff Blanc, director of marketing for Infogrames. ‘‘We wanted to capture the true essence of the cartoons by essentially creating interactive cartoons."

Warners is promoting the titles through an in-theater campaign on 12,000 screens across the United States.

The deal is part of Warner Bros. Interactive's plan to beef up the number of vidgame titles it produces by 27 percent this year by licensing rights to TV shows, film franchises and characters it owns in the Turner, Hannah-Barbera and Cartoon Network libraries, including ''Scooby-Doo," ''Animaniacs," "Pinky & the Brain," ''The Flintstones" and ''Powder Puff Girls."

It plans to release a ''Wild Wild West" game in November, as well as a ''Dukes of Hazard" game for PlayStation and a golf game based on ''Caddyshack."

''There's a plethora of titles we could do," said Rob Sebastian, executive director of Warner Bros. Interactive. ''It all depends on finding the right partners who can bring our licensed product to the global market."

The division, which was restructured nearly 18 months ago, recently experienced a two-year delay on its latest ''Superman" title from Titus Software for Nintendo's console.

The division plans to release 32 licensed titles this year, alone, with more deals planned to be inked with partners in the handheld space, boosting its efforts on the Game Boy Color system which enables it to capitalize on the market for video games among young children and girls.

Infogrames is currently producing an ''Antz" Game Boy title for DreamWorks for the fall and has previously produced titles for Disney.

Nintendo Says To Connect Gameboy With Internet

Japan's Nintendo Co Ltd said on Monday that its Gameboy hand-held game machines will be able to link to the Internet starting early next year.

The company has developed software that will enable users to connect Gameboys to mobile phones and personal handyphone systems for Internet access, it said.

Users will be able to exchange data with other users and to add features such as new characters and background to games through the Internet.

The price of the new software is still undecided, a spokesman said.

SC&T International Inc. Announces Software Publishing Division to Support NUON and Other Platforms

SC&T International Inc. Wednesday announced plans to form a new software publishing division.

The new division will focus initially on NUON interactive technologies to be introduced by Toshiba and other consumer electronics manufacturers throughout the next year. SC&T already holds a strategic partnership licensing agreement for several of its Per4mer accessory and peripheral products, with VM Labs Inc.

James Copland, chairman & chief executive officer for SC&T stated, ''We

view NUON and Interactive DVD to be significant new growth markets over the next five years. It is a significant opportunity for SC&T to diversify and to assume a position of leadership with cutting edge home entertainment technology.

‘‘The publishing division will look to license, publish, co-develop and distribute products on a global basis." He added, ‘‘The company is currently speaking with several industry veterans from the publishing industry to head this new enterprise."

Donald A. Thomas, Jr., director of peripheral licensing and promotions for VM Labs Inc., noted, ‘‘SC&T is a pro-active company which is poised to exploit the explosive growth trends of DVD and the emerging markets associated with Interactive DVD. SC&T has an aggressive engineering & marketing plan for its licensed family of NUON-based accessories and peripheral products.

‘‘Their venture into the publishing arena is a natural next-step to preempt competition, improve market positioning and create for themselves remarkably cost effective cross-marketing opportunities. SC&T has great potential to be a formidable publisher in this new market."

SC&T International Inc., develops and markets racing wheels, game controllers and sound enhancement products for the rapidly growing PC and Video Game arenas. Developer of the world’s first Force Feed Back racing wheel, the company also holds patents, and receives licensing revenues for these technologies.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online - Online Users Growl & Purr!
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Official JagFest ’99 Report

I’m pleased to say that JagFest ’99, held in Rochester, MN, was a wonderful success. I’m proud and very happy to have been those host for this year’s ’fest, as I was able to supply a lot of things Jaguar and Lynx fans were looking for.

On the Lynx front, Ponx was a hit with several attendees (and thanks for those purchases! ;-)), and I know every Lynx fan there had a blast doing comlynx Checkered Flag (5 people), Raiden (2 people), and other games like Slime World, Cal. Games, and Xenophobe.

We demoed some cool recent and upcoming games like SIMIS, Sokomania, and Hyperdrome (not sure if anyone actually fired up the latter).

On the much anticipated Jaguar front... many tournaments were held, and people definitely "showed their stuff" on games like Breakout 2000, Tempest 2000, and Zero 5 (all I can say is. "Wow, Clay"). NBA Jam rocked the house more than once, and other games like Ultra Vortek and Doom saw play time as well.

We hoped to do a functional Voice Modem demo, but time slipped away from us. Maybe next year, guys. :-) Lots of other rare hardware was on display -- Jag Stereo adapter, Alpine boards, weird controllers, a Lynx dev kit, and more.

Scott unfortunately could not get the latest Assassin demo to work. Native didn't work out, either.

Protector was I think a surprise hit. People expected a straight Defender clone, but really enjoyed the new enemies and powerups and overall gameplay.

BattleSphere was of course immensely popular, and the networking was very solid. Hats off to 4Play on this marvelous game that we all look forward to owning one day.

Skyhammer was the "special announcement" game presented by Songbird Productions at about 5-6pm during the event. All the Jaguar fans I spoke with were excited to see how well the game played, the solid frame rate, and the attractive graphics. Not to mention the intricate gameplay centering around a series of nonlinear missions. A second play mode is included in this game, called "Battle" mode, where you have to fight off wave after wave of enemies (maybe they should have named this mode 'Gauntlet' ;-)). Very fun game, and enjoyed by all.

The most disappointing aspect of the event, as one might imagine, was what I'll call mediocre attendance. About 10 of the people on my online "attendees" list were no-shows, including Terance Williams, who we were all hoping could provide an update on Gorf 2000. Fred, Randy, Jason S., Robin, and more also didn't show up (or at least I didn't get to meet them if they did...) Sorry you guys couldn't make it, it would have been great to meet you. Raven Video Games did not make it down from the Twin Cities due to a co-worker calling in sick that day.

Having said all that, I am happy to announce that attendance was probably better than even JagFest attendees realize. I sold 45 tickets to the event (adult and child combined), and another 25 people that were friends, family, and fellow church-goers also showed up (at no cost to them) to either help out at the ticket table, see my crazy video game hobby in action, etc. :-) That brings our grand total to 70 PEOPLE for JagFest '99!

I know with a little more work and regional promotion, we could make it an even bigger event next year.

Thanks to everyone who helped make it a success, and especially to the folks who traveled the furthest -- Kevin and Katie, Clay and Michelle, Brian and his father, and everyone else!

Songbird Productions was pleased to be the official host of JagFest '99.

Carl Forhan
Songbird Productions

JagFest'99 Through My Eyes

Posted by ETHunter

The following is my detailed story trying to get to, and ultimately attending jagFest’99.

So I finally made it to June 18,1999. it was time for JagFest! I woke up at 4:30 in the morning so I could pack the car and hopefully get a good start on the trip of about 80 miles. Everything would have went smoothly if only my brother would have not forgotten his TV at his home. We were planning on leaving my house at 6:00am so I told him to be on time at my house. Not only does he show up 25 minutes late but, like I said, brings jag but no TV! I’m in disbelief because he lives 15 miles from me and 6:30am is rush hour here in Mpls. I was so mad we had to go back to his home first I don’t think we talked till we were 10 miles from Rochester. It ended up not mattering but I finally arrived at the location around 8:30.

So I finally get to the right Holiday Inn (I went into the first Holiday Inn I saw on Broadway thinking there could only be one Holiday Inn on Broadway, but upon entering thought something wasn’t right when it was WAY too ritzy, but went ahead anyway and asked the front desk "Where is JagFest being held at?" They had no idea what I was talking about so I excused myself and drove down Broadway a little further to find the right place.)

I entered through the front doors and immediately saw a large room with TV’s and Atari banners. HONEY, I’M HOME! I entered the room and was immediately greeted by Carl Forhan. It was very cool to put a face to the name and founder of Songbird Productions. I and my just forgiven brother began to unpack the car and put my TV and Jags on the table right next to Kevin Manne’s table. I had never met Kevin but have seen many pictures of him from previous JagFest’s so when he approached to say hi I immediately said "Kevin!" like I knew him for many years. Very wierd.

Before too long it was 10:00 and the fest had officially begun. After maybe a half an hour I was thinking that I should link up Doom for a little fun but was unsure if it would be appropriate when I saw some young children already in attendance. I went ahead anyway with the deathmatch setup and came to the realization that these "young children" were very good at Doom. Almost too good. In fact I was reluctant to deathmatch with them for fear of being humiliated. So I played it safe and watched others play their games. One of these young children turned out to be Scott Walters 7 year old son.

It really began to get fun when I began to meet other attendees that I’ve seen posting at JI. It was very cool meeting Kevin, thought Dan Loosen was very cool and his friend from Milwaukee, Max (can’t spell your last name) was very friendly. It was a pleasure to meet Dan Iacovelli from AVC and put an order in for the FREE JagFest newsletter! Clay Haliwell amazed me by pouring in over 420,000 points in Zero-5, easily winning that competition. I try to be modest but I was very lucky and did have success with the Tempest2000 and Breakout2000 competition.

Carl finally let us see and play Protector and I was very impressed despite totally sucking at it. I need a good month with a game before I get the hang of it. Not to my surprise, my success with Battlsphere didn’t go much better. I would end up flying in the completely wrong direction I was supposed to go and even ended up firing upon (and destroying) my own star base or something like that simply because I had no idea what to do. Give me a manual and the game for 2 months and I’ll be the most dangerous BattleSphere pilot you’ve ever seen. At least I want to believe that!

To top it off, Carl gathered us all around the big TV to show us a little

surprise which ended up being the very cool Skyhammer. It ran fast, smooth, great soundtrack, non-linear gameplay, everything you could like in a game. By the time the Fest was nearing its end, I started to get very tired and had trouble sitting and playing games endlessly. So I'd play for 15 minutes then walk around aimlessly and boy was that ever fun! :-)

I almost forgot that Carl forced me to be interviewed and I reluctantly agreed to make a fool of myself. I really do hate cameras as I never seem to look good in them. Upon further review I think I need to diet or something. What a mess!!!

So the night came to a close and I sadly packed my belongings and packed my car for the trip home. I just may have had the best day I could remember except when my kids were born and the day I was tricked into marriage. The whole way home all I could talk about to my brother is BattleSphere this and Protector that and Skyhammer too! What a day it was. In fact, I had so much fun, I'm going to try to travel any distance to get to the next one.

Sorry for the way too long story
Micah (ETHunter)

Atari Video Club Announcements

Due to printing problems I had with the jagfest issue (b/w versions) I'll be taking request for the above mentioned issue until august 30th. To request a copy (one per household please): either e-mail me at AtariVideoClub@angelfire.com subject: B/W JagFest issue and in the body put your name,address,city state and zip code (in other words your snail mail address) or use the form at the clubs website. (if you already requested an issue at fest'99 please don't request again) please allow 2 to 3 weeks for delivery.

Due to scheduling problems at the fest Atarimania wasn't able to be played there. So, starting june 21,1999 till July 30th if you enter Atarimania 8 using World Tour racing you'll be able to win the following:
1. A color copy of the jagfest issue (both divisions (I'll make an extra copy of issue for the other winner)

2. For Div I winner: I'll add an extra year to the winners membership to AVC after the first year has expired.
For Div II winner: a free year membership to AVC.

Good luck.

(this is only good for world tour racing and not any other selected Atarimania game and only is the free for all competition (follow the rules for WTR on the AtariMania page at the website.))

Thank you

Dan Iacovelli
Atari Video Club chairperson
Editor of the Atari Zone (Fanzine and E-zine)
Webmaster of AVC Online
Dan@AVC}
AVC Online = http://avconline.atari.org
(ICQ #14050168)

Pac-Man Fever is Now Shipping!

The blockbuster single and album from the golden age of video games is now available on CD. Hear all the original songs remastered by the original artists, Buckner & Garcia, specifically for this release.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Microsoft Offers Patch To Fix Web Software Breach

Microsoft Corp. Friday acted to limit any damage from a serious security gap in its software that could allow hackers to break into computers running up to 20 percent of the world's Web sites.

The software giant published a fix on the Internet for the flaw in its Windows NT operating system two days after a small California company that discovered the problem made available a software tool to exploit it.

Executives of the company say they published the tool only to force Microsoft to respond to the problem, but the software giant was highly critical of the move.

So far there have been only a ''very small number" of reported break-ins, but hackers easily could cover their tracks, leaving systems compromised without the knowledge of their administrators, said Shawn Hernan of the federally funded CERT Coordination Center at the Software Engineering Institute in Pittsburgh, which responds to computer security threats.

He said the so-called buffer overflow problem was a serious threat because it allows a malicious person using standard Internet protocols to gain

high-level access to computers running the Microsoft Internet Information Server software, which operates 20 to 25 percent of the world’s Web sites.

‘‘You combine all that and you have a very serious potential problem," he said.

He said the flaw got a ranking of 95 on the agency’s 100-point scale of seriousness.

About 90 percent of computers running the Microsoft software are vulnerable to the problem, said Firas Bushnaq, chief executive officer of eCompany LLC in Corona del Mar, which discovered the problem June 8 while testing its new network security auditing software.

Officials of the nine-person company immediately notified Microsoft, which acknowledged the problem and said it would release a fix within a few days.

But late Tuesday eCompany officials became frustrated by what they considered Microsoft’s slow response and published a "demonstration program" to exploit the hole as well as a patch to prevent any breach of security.

‘‘We never intended to fight Microsoft in any way," said Firas Bushnaq, president and chief executive officer of eCompany. ‘‘Basically the doors of the Internet were wide open, people were not paying attention to it, and Microsoft was downplaying it."

Jason Garms, lead product manager for Windows NT security, disputed that account and questioned the company’s motives.

‘‘We certainly worked with them in good faith to find a solution for this," Garms said. ‘‘It’s just unfortunate that they took the actions they did to publish this tool, whose only purpose is to allow non-technical people to attack innocent people’s Web sites."

Judge Challenges Microsoft Witness

The Microsoft Corp. is wrestling with indications from the judge at its trial that he may consider the company’s intentions toward industry rivals when he decides whether it broke antitrust laws.

In an unusually frank exchange with the company’s final witness Monday, the judge challenged him directly over whether such consideration is appropriate as he delivers his verdict later this year.

The move could bode poorly for Microsoft, whose incendiary e-mails among top executives describing plans to topple competitors have become important evidence in the trial.

Economist Richard Schmalensee, who will finish testifying later this week, argued that Microsoft’s decision to give away its Internet software can’t be considered ‘‘predatory," partly because there is no evidence that it planned eventually to begin charging for the software.

The government alleges in its antitrust case that Microsoft gave its software away to undermine sales of a popular rival Web browser from Netscape Communications Corp.

But Schmalensee said that without any evidence showing Microsoft's pricing strategy was illegal, the judge shouldn't try to interpret the company's intentions. That, he said, would be ''slippery, difficult and fraught with peril."

''It's difficult to know what the intent is of a multiperson organization," Schmalensee said. ''Most economists would not attach high importance to intent."

''That's what courts do every day," U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson said, interrupting. Without another way to know whether Microsoft set its software prices illegally low, ''I can see for the court's purposes why intent might be relevant."

Schmalensee testified that even at companies competing fairly, ''Somebody will write a document that says, 'Let's kill them."'

''I don't think it's any simpler for the court or for a jury," the judge said. But ''juries are called to do this all the time."

Microsoft lawyer John Warden said outside court that focusing on the rallying cries of employees at the height of the infamous ''browser wars" carries ''tremendous risks" and violates principles surrounding antitrust verdicts.

''It is very, very difficult to distinguish between the intent to get all the business and the intent to drive all the rivals out," Warden said. ''The same words can mean both those things."

Earlier Monday, Schmalensee sought to convince the judge that federal intervention isn't needed to preserve competition in the industry's fight over Internet software.

''The way to see if a war is over is to see whether the sides are still firing, and both sides are still firing," said Schmalensee, citing Netscape's recent purchase for $10 billion by America Online Inc.

Schmalensee maintained that the government, in more than five months in the courtroom, has failed to prove that Microsoft's behavior toward software rivals hurt consumers - the guiding principle toward applying antitrust law.

Microsoft Expert Faces Tough Questions

Microsoft Corp.'s economic expert faced tough cross-examination at the software giant's antitrust trial Wednesday, on everything from his hourly fee to errors in a chart he used for evidence.

Richard Schmalensee, dean of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sloan School of Management and the expert economic witness for Microsoft, first testified that he could not remember how much Microsoft had paid him for his services.

After repeated questions from a government lawyer, Schmalensee, the last of 26 witnesses in the trial, finally said Microsoft paid him more than $100,000 over seven years.

Under yet more questioning, he then said Microsoft paid him more than $250,000 in the last two years and his consulting firm threw in an extra $300,000 bonus. Schmalensee, who charges $800 an hour for consulting work, said that he may have made even more.

In the cross-examination, government lawyer David Boies also tried to demonstrate that Schmalensee lacked command of the subjects he had testified on for Microsoft.

The Justice Department and 19 states contend that Microsoft holds monopoly power in the operating system for personal computers and illegally used that power to compete unfairly with Netscape Communications Corp. Netscape has since been bought by America Online Inc.

The government says that Microsoft won the ‘‘browser war," forcing its Internet Explorer Web on computer makers, and putting Netscape’s browser at a disadvantage.

Schmalensee said that the browser war is far from over, and under questioning from a Microsoft lawyer had shown two charts that illustrated Netscape’s healthy share of the browser market.

Boies showed the charts and asked Schmalensee: ‘‘Did you make a visual inspection of these documents to see that they made sense?"

Schmalensee said, ‘‘As I sit here, a comparison with the one on the right suggests there is a difficulty."

‘‘They cannot be reconciled," Boies said.

The first chart showed that Netscape’s market was on the upswing, and that from six to seven million people had obtained the program with a new computers between the spring of 1998 and spring 1999.

The next chart, however, showed that during the same period the average number of people was more than 8 million.

Schmalensee had also testified that Microsoft’s Windows program was potentially under siege from a host of new programs that could run on the Web, no matter what the underlying operating system.

But he acknowledged under cross-examination that he had done no study, had no projections of numbers and no knowledge about the authors or details of the programs he cited in his testimony.

The witness stage of the trial is expected to end this week, which is to be followed by a recess of about a month before summing up.

Microsoft Judge Asks Witness To Assume Firm Monopoly

Testimony in the landmark Microsoft antitrust trial drew nearer to a close Thursday with the judge asking the software giant’s final witness to assume the company was a monopoly in answering a question.

Richard Schmalensee, dean of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Sloan School of Management, was slow to answer a question about Microsoft’s

contract conditions when District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson asked: ‘‘Assume Microsoft is a monopoly -- would they then be anti-competitive?"

Jackson’s remarks brought a smile to the face of Justice Department antitrust chief Joel Klein who was present in the court Thursday.

It was the 76th day of presentations to Jackson who is widely tipped to go against the company when he issues his findings later this year.

The federal government and 19 states have accused Microsoft of illegally using its monopoly in personal computer operating software to perpetuate that monopoly and gain advantage over Internet browser-maker Netscape Communications.

Microsoft Corp. lawyers, who have already gotten Jackson reversed once by an appeals court, argue that the government’s case falls short of the stringent standards needed to prove major violations of the nation’s antitrust laws.

They say the ‘‘browser war" between Netscape and Microsoft has benefited consumers, the ultimate yardstick in judging the health of competition.

‘‘What the evidence at trial has shown is that Microsoft’s actions resulted in an intense period of competition," said Microsoft lawyer Richard Urowsky outside court. ‘‘It bought the price down to zero for consumers, resulted in immense product improvements and strong increases in output and that competition continues."

But observers of the trial say Microsoft is likely to be on the losing side. Even one of the company’s strongest supporters, home-state Republican Sen. Slade Gorton, has predicted the decision will go against the Redmond, Wash.-based firm.

‘‘Assuming that the judge finds for the government, which I think the court likely will, the significance of the case ultimately will depend on the relief that the court ultimately grants," said Mark Schechter, an antitrust expert with the law firm of Howrey & Simon in Washington.

Microsoft elected to forego a jury, so it is Jackson who will decide which witnesses to believe as he writes findings of fact, expected to be issued in September.

After that, Jackson will issue conclusions of law and finally determine what remedies are needed to correct any problems he finds.

It is unclear at this stage what sort of remedies might be imposed or if Microsoft would choose to settle the case or fight it all the way, possibly to the Supreme Court.

‘‘In a very real sense, the most important part of the determination is before us," said Schechter.

In court Thursday, government attorney David Boies asked Schmalensee, Microsoft’s chief economic witness, if he pursued data that supported Microsoft with more vigor than information that tended to undermine it.

Schmalensee smiled slightly and replied: ‘‘Is that just a blanket challenge to my ethics? How am I to interpret that?"

‘‘The answer, unfortunately, is yes and no," Schmalensee replied. ‘‘I owe

my client an effective presentation of the facts as I understand them. I owe the court an honest and serious effort to find out the truth."

Wednesday, Schalansee under questioning said Microsoft had directly paid him at least $250,000 in the last two years for consulting work.

Final Microsoft Witness Testifies

The final witness in the Microsoft antitrust trial acknowledged the software giant’s dominant Windows operating system will be ‘‘the only viable alternative" for most computer makers in the near future.

The government was expected to finish questioning economist Richard Schmalensee today. It said his testimony supported government allegations that Microsoft is a monopolist that illegally wields its influence.

‘‘From everything I’ve seen, for some number of years, while there will be many ways to access the Internet, a lot of work will be done on (Windows) desktops using desktop equipment," Schmalensee said Wednesday during cross-examination by government attorneys.

But Schmalensee argued that Microsoft can’t be a monopolist because it faces competition from promising upstart rivals in the nation’s high-tech industry.

He described new technologies - including non-Microsoft handheld computers, a new generation of software running across the Internet and the rival Linux operating system - that he said make Microsoft too worried to be the entrenched monopolist the government describes.

The argument is important to Microsoft because it wants to show that other companies believe they can make money competing against the software giant and its flagship Windows software.

‘‘Saying there are no viable commercial alternatives to Windows is less true than it was six months ago," Schmalensee said.

But when the top Justice Department lawyer in the case, David Boies, pressed Schmalensee, the economist couldn’t offer details about the popularity of Linux computers, the booming development of new Internet-based software, or even when those types of Web programs will become widespread.

‘‘In relative terms, there will be a shift in activity where the computing occurs," Schmalensee said. ‘‘I’m not a prophet. One extrapolates in this business with some risk. It could happen. It could happen soon."

Earlier in the day, Boies opened his courtroom challenge by eliciting testimony that Schmalensee was paid hundreds of thousands of dollars in consulting fees, along with an admission that recent evidence he prepared for court was wrong.

Boies confronted Schmalensee with two charts the economist created showing increasing distribution since 1996 of rival Internet software from Netscape Communications Corp.

But as Boies pointed out, the numbers in Schmalensee’s charts - based on

the same data - don’t match. A visibly rattled Schmalensee acknowledged that the comparison ‘‘suggests a difficulty."

‘‘It does more than suggests a difficulty, doesn’t it?" Boies asked. ‘‘They cannot be reconciled, can they?"

‘‘Mr. Boies, one of these is wrong," Schmalensee said.

Microsoft Trial Testimony Ends

Testimony ended Thursday on the 76th day of the landmark Microsoft antitrust trial, a courtroom drama that offered a unique look at the nation’s booming high-tech industry and the software giant that dominates it.

The trial’s final witness, economist Richard Schmalensee of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, argued forcefully that the $14 billion Microsoft Corp. isn’t the entrenched monopolist that illegally wields extraordinary influence, as portrayed by the government.

‘‘Microsoft was clearly engaged in a broad pattern of illegal behavior," Assistant U.S. Attorney General Joel Klein told reporters on the courthouse steps. ‘‘They used every trick in the monopolist’s book. ... You name it, they did it."

Stephen Houck of the New York attorney general’s office, the lead lawyer for the 19 states suing Microsoft with the Justice Department, described the company to reporters as a ‘‘malignant despot" and said its behavior ‘‘will justify a very significant remedy."

Schmalensee buttressed his claim that Microsoft isn’t a monopoly by describing a raft of competitors on the company’s horizon - the $10 billion alliance between rivals America Online Inc. and Netscape Communications Corp., handheld computers and a new generation of software running across high-speed Internet connections.

But in what became routine during the trial, the company’s witness was challenged again Thursday in a piercing cross-examination by David Boies, the Justice Department lawyer whose tough questioning has sometimes appeared to inflict upon Microsoft the courtroom equivalent of a computer system meltdown.

Boies produced handwritten notes from Microsoft’s files quoting billionaire Chairman Bill Gates - ‘‘BillG" - in December about the prospective threat from the new AOL-Netscape alliance, announced just weeks earlier along with an important agreement with Sun Microsystems Inc.

‘‘AOL doesn’t have it in their genes to attack us in the platform space," said Gates, his comments outside the courtroom once again seemingly undermining what his lawyers were telling the judge in court. ‘‘If you want to lose sleep tonight, worry about Sun."

Schmalensee said he assessed the AOL threat from secret documents produced by America Online.

And Microsoft lawyer Michael Lacovara cited a news report - published just hours earlier - that AOL was in early negotiations Thursday with a small

company that makes computers that don’t use Microsoft’s dominant Windows operating system.

‘‘I can’t say you haven’t brought me current" on industry developments, said U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson.

Although Thursday was the last day of testimony, the judge may not issue a final verdict until early next year. And the case could wind through appeals courts for years.

Since the trial started, the sides have met at least twice in unsuccessful attempts to negotiate a settlement. Future talks are anticipated this summer.

Using tens of thousands of pages of e-mails and other documents, the government sought to portray Microsoft as a cunning industry titan that illegally used its heft to undermine competing technologies and to discourage other companies from supporting its rivals.

Microsoft responded that it competes roughly, but fairly, in a bare-knuckles industry with billions at stake. And it returned again and again to its argument that the government has failed to prove its actions hurt consumers.

Evidence seemed to bear out both views, and also provided an intriguing - and sometimes embarrassing - glimpse beneath the veneer of the flashy high-tech industry. E-mails, handwritten notes from meetings and other paperwork revealed a take-no-prisoners business world where alliances are proposed, sealed and dissolved.

The co-founder of Netscape, Marc Andreessen, proposed combining forces with AOL in 1995 to ‘‘kick the (expletive) out of the beast from Redmond," a reference to Microsoft’s headquarters in Washington state. Sun’s top executive, Scott McNealy, told employees to use his company’s Java technology to ‘‘charge, kill HP (Hewlett-Packard), IBM, Msft and Apple all at once."

Gates complained in e-mail that IBM executives were ‘‘rabid Java backers," and in another message asked an employee bluntly: ‘‘Do we have a clear plan on what we want Apple to do to undermine Sun?"

And when AOL’s chairman, Steve Case, wrote to Netscape’s James Barksdale about an alliance in 1995, the two portrayed themselves as Allied powers during World War II.

Microsoft, of course, was the Axis.

‘‘If we fight them together we can win, and what a victory it would be - the enemy of my enemy is my friend," Barksdale wrote to Case, calling him ‘‘Franklin D." Barksdale was ‘‘Josef Stalin," but he complained, ‘‘I don’t like playing this part."

Although more than two dozen experts and executives took the stand, the witness most likely to be remembered never set foot in the courthouse: Bill Gates.

Gates - shown by government lawyers in a videotape of a pre-trial deposition last summer - appeared so forgetful and evasive in that tape that even the judge told lawyers in a private meeting, ‘‘I think it’s evident to every spectator that, for whatever reasons, in many respects Mr.

Gates has not been particularly responsive."

With testimony finished, lawyers left the courthouse blocks from the U.S. Capitol to rest and to submit their written arguments - expected to span hundreds of pages each - on Aug. 10 in the next phase of the trial.

Futuristic Headsets at PC Expo

Need more privacy to type that e-mail? Just strap a visor to your head to view your words without a computer screen.

Stuck behind your desktop? Take a stroll with a wireless headset and dictate memos into your computer’s speech recognition program.

For anyone who’s feeling trapped instead of liberated by technology, help is on the way.

At the PC Expo trade show this week, half-a-dozen manufacturers were displaying products that aim to untether us from technology’s constraints and expand the ways we communicate with computers.

Consider, if you will, substituting headgear for a computer screen. While the futuristic concept has been around for a couple of years, new competition among manufacturers may finally force prices low enough to trigger consumer demand.

Daeyang E&C of South Korea introduced a prototype of its Personal LCD Display Headset, which it aims to sell early next year for under $800.

Peering through the sleek silver-gray headpiece, a user sees what seems to be a full-size computer monitor - but is actually a magnified half-inch screen that uses liquid crystal to show images and text. The device, which is wired to a desktop computer, is designed for privacy-minded people like those using laptops on airplanes, company officials said.

A competing product displayed by Sony Electronics, the PC Glasstron Personal Video Headset, was first introduced more than a year ago and sells for $2,599, including built-in headphones.

While the device also works with DVD players and other video sources, the pitch at PC Expo also stressed portable computers, with Sony setting up airline seats to provide a real-life taste.

Company officials declined to say when prices might be cut from levels that are far above what a video player or even a computer costs. But Lloyd Klarke, Sony’s business manager for advanced displays, expressed optimism the product could take off.

‘‘We envision one day the screen may disappear and turn into something that you can see through your glasses," he said.

People who like to dictate to their computers, rather than the other way around, were offered help from Emkay Innovative Products, a unit of Chicago-based hearing aid maker Knowles Electronics.

The company displayed a wireless headset that uses radio waves instead of cables to transmit spoken words to desktop computers loaded with any of

the voice-recognition programs sold nowadays.

Speaking into a tiny microphone that blocks out background noise, users can wander up to 30 feet from their computers. The words appear on their monitors - with mixed accuracy. The product’s usefulness is limited by the speech software, whose ability to recognize language is imperfect. When a spokeswoman demonstrating the headset said the word ‘‘biceps," the words ‘‘Cover V sets" appeared on the screen.

Emkay’s wireless headset sells for $395 and is aimed largely at lawyers, doctors and other professionals who frequently dictate memos.

The sensory enhancing products on display weren’t all high-tech. Bausch & Lomb exhibited its $295 PC MagniViewer, a 6-inch-by-8-inch magnification glass that hangs about two feet in front of the computer, enlarging the images on the screen by 175 percent. The device is designed for people who use bifocals, or who view lots of small computer text for many hours a day.

Company officials said the recently introduced product allows better viewing than magnifiers which are fitted directly against the computer screen.

While only a couple hundred have been sold so far, ‘‘we foresee over the coming years a multi-million dollar market for this product," said Carl Fisherman, a consultant who worked on the Bausch & Lomb product.

Still, price could be prohibitive. The device costs more than a typical computer monitor and nearly as much as the cheapest PCs on the market.

‘‘It’s more relaxing on the eyes," said attendee Kevin Joseph, an Antigua-based information systems manager for the Cable & Wireless telecommunications company. ‘‘But I’m not sure how comfortable I would feel all day staring at that thing."

Company Hopes $199 PCs Will Draw New ’Net Users

Microworkz.com made a splash this year by selling the first $299 personal computers, and now the company is lowering the ante by offering a $199 box.

But cheap computers are just a foot in the door, according to the founder of the rapidly growing company, who said his real goal is to make money by providing customers an Internet connection and taking a share of any online commerce revenues.

‘‘We are morphing ourselves from hardware to software," said President and Chief Executive Officer Rick Latman. ‘‘Where we don’t want to be is in the rat’s nest of $400 PCs for the rest of our careers."

A novel twist is that the company’s latest product, the $199 iToaster, eschews Microsoft Corp.’s market-dominating Windows operating system in favor of a custom-built interface based partly on the rival Linux system.

Microworkz continues to offer a range of Windows-based personal computers including the WEBzter line priced at $299 and up, but for the new model the company wanted a simpler interface that might draw in novices, Latman said.

Microsoft’s famously stringent licensing standards prevented Microworkz

from creating the customized computer desktop it wanted, with about a dozen button-like icons leading to the Internet, built-in applications and sites run by partners like Amazon.com Inc., eBay Inc. and RealNetworks Inc.

‘‘I don’t think Microsoft is very happy we’re doing this," Latman said. ‘‘I don’t care. The bottom line is this is good for the consumer. This addresses a void in the computer market."

Analysts are not so sure, wondering whether a $199 non-Windows computer will find a market in a world where Windows machines are available for just a bit more at retail stores or for free through advertiser-supported promotions.

‘‘The reality is that we’ve seen nothing that indicates this is what people are waiting for," said Harry Fenik, vice president of analysis at Zona Research. ‘‘There has not been a crying need for isolated, proprietary computers."

Latman said the iToaster will appeal to novice users who want to get on the Internet quickly and to experienced users who want an extra machine. He said he would not rule out cutting the price further if needed to achieve the company’s main goal of accumulating Internet-using customers.

‘‘We will do credit lines, we will do leases. As it gets closer to Christmas I don’t rule anything out," he said. "Obviously the goal here is to get eyeballs."

The company has plans for additional low-price computers including laptop and hand-held models, he said.

The iToaster, which will ship beginning July 1, includes an Intel Corp. Pentium II 266 megahertz processor, 2.1 gigabyte hard drive and 32 megabytes of memory. There are no slots for diskettes or CD-ROMs in the sealed black box, although external drives can be added. A matching monitor is $139 extra.

Users who turn the computer on and plug in a phone line will be taken to the Microworkz Web site, where they can activate a prearranged Internet account for $19.95 a month. They will not have the option of switching to a different Internet service provider.

Microworkz initially will limit orders to 10,000 computers to prevent a repeat of the company’s disastrous response to a flood of orders for its heavily publicized WEBzter, launched in March when it had just 39 employees in tiny Seattle offices.

‘‘The Webzter was a nightmare," Latman said. ‘‘We took more orders than I think anyone could have produced."

Many customers waited weeks for their computer, and some demanded their money back, although Latman says the company eventually caught up. Now its 200 employees are housed in a spacious office and assembly plant in a Seattle suburb, with plans to expand into another building next door.

And Latman, a 30-something former Merrill Lynch bond trader who founded the company in 1991 and originally sold software to bridal stores, has lined up Japanese manufacturers for a possible distribution deal with CompUSA Inc.

As to whether the company plans to go public, Latman declined to comment. But one can only speculate, given that the company recently changed its name from Microworkz Computer Corp. to Microworkz.com.

AOL Europe May Strike Back With Free Service

AOL Europe is considering offering free Internet access in Britain to counter the rise of new online companies such as Freeserve and to jump-start its growth in the region.

AOL Europe lost its lead in the UK Internet market last fall after electronics retailer Dixons Group Plc launched Freeserve, a service with no monthly subscription fee. It is struggling to gain share in Germany, Spain and other European countries where incumbent phone companies have built solid positions in online services.

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